



## No Stone Left Unturned: Exploring the Convergence of New Capitalism in Inclusive Education in the U.S.

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**Abstract:** This paper examines how inclusive education reform is appropriated when New Capitalism work practices dominate the discourse of school improvement in an urban school. We asked how New Capitalism mediates the formation of a professional vision for inclusive education. Using analytical tools from Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), we analyzed school, district, and university documents and artifacts, interviews, field observations gathered by site professors, videos of teachers' classroom practices, and video-stimulated interviews. The findings demonstrate how New Capitalism shaped a professional vision (Goodwin, 1994) for inclusive education through the deployment of certain technologies such as performativity and its graphic displays of quality and auditing practices. Performativity shaped relationships among school personnel and their understanding of their work, inclusive education, and students from ethnic minorities struggling to

learn. Our discussion of the findings and our recommendations are guided by an inclusive education agenda that addresses issues of misdistribution, misrecognition, and misrepresentation.

**Keywords:** inclusive education; New Capitalism; neoliberalism in education; performativity; professional vision; students with disabilities; special education; professional learning communities.

### **Ninguna Piedra sin Examinar: Explorando la Convergencia del Nuevo Capitalismo en la Educación Inclusiva en los EE.UU.**

**Resumen:** Este artículo examina cómo la educación inclusiva es apropiada en una escuela urbana donde prácticas laborales del Nuevo Capitalismo dominan el discurso escolar. Nos preguntamos cómo el nuevo capitalismo media la formación de una visión profesional de la educación inclusiva. Usando Análisis Crítico del Discurso (CDA), analizamos documentos escolares, distritales y producidos en universidades, entrevistas, observaciones de campo, vídeos de prácticas de enseñanza, y entrevistas estimuladas por videos. Nuestro análisis indica que las prácticas laborales del Nuevo Capitalismo forma una visión profesional (Goodwin, 1994) para la educación inclusiva a través de la implementación de ciertas tecnologías de performatividad y sus representaciones de calidad educacional y prácticas de auditoría. La performatividad moldeó las relaciones entre el personal de la escuela y la comprensión de su trabajo, la educación inclusiva, y estudiantes pertenecientes a minorías étnicas. Nuestra discusión de los resultados y nuestras recomendaciones son guiadas por un programa de educación inclusiva que atiende problemas de distribución de recursos escolares que es injusta, la falta de reconocimiento de ciertos capitales culturales, y la poca oportunidad que tienen las familias para representarse en decisiones escolares.

**Palabras clave:** educación inclusiva; Nuevo Capitalismo; Neoliberalismo; performatividad; visión profesional; estudiantes con discapacidad; educación especial; comunidades de aprendizaje profesional.

### **Nenhuma Pedra sem Examinar: Explorando a Convergência do Novo Capitalismo e a Educação Inclusiva em os EUA**

**Resumo:** Este artigo analisa a forma como a educação inclusiva é apropriado em uma escola urbana, onde as práticas de trabalho do Novo Capitalismo dominam o discurso escolar. A pergunta da pesquisa é como o as praticas laborais do Novo Capitalismo mediam formação de uma visão profissional da educação inclusiva. Utilizando Análise Crítica do Discurso (CDA), foram analisados registros escolares, distritais e produzidos nas universidades, entrevistas, observações de campo vídeos, de práticas de ensino e entrevistas estimuladas por vídeos. Nossa análise indica que as práticas de trabalho do Novo Capitalismo configuram uma visão profissional (Goodwin, 1994) para a educação inclusiva, através da implementação de certas tecnologias de performatividade e suas representações de qualidade e auditoria práticas educativas. A performatividade forma as relações entre os funcionários da escola e compreensão do seu trabalho, a educação inclusiva, e sobre os alunos de minorias étnicas. Nossa discussão sobre os resultados e as nossas recomendações são guiados por um programa de educação inclusiva, que atenda os problemas de distribuição de recursos escolares que é injusto, a falta de reconhecimento de alguns capitais culturais, e das escassas oportunidades para que as famílias sejam representadas nas decisões escolares.

**Palavras-chave:** educação inclusiva; Novo Capitalismo; Neoliberalismo; performatividade; visão profissional; alunos com deficiência; educação especial; comunidades profissionais de aprendizagem.

## Introduction<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of this paper is to examine how inclusive education reform is appropriated in schools where New Capitalism work practices dominate the discourse of school improvement. We seek to understand the interplay between New Capitalism work practices, inclusive education, and professional practices of teachers and administrators. We argue that agendas to design inclusive, supportive learning environments that promote broad and multiple forms of diversity compete and collide with reforms based on a neoliberal agenda (i.e., accountability, flexibility, and choice). These collisions have the potential to disrupt the curricular and pedagogical practices of school professionals committed to pursuing an equity agenda in schools. Without careful attention to how certain practices interact and are altered over time, New Capitalism can appropriate inclusive education as an ideological tool saturated with shallow sentiments that lead to little or no substantive improvements in educational access and outcomes for diverse and underserved students.

We use New Capitalism in this paper to mean the dominance of efficiency, standardization, and micro-segmentation of profit taking (e.g., parsing the time that educators spend with particular students by role) at the expense of local, place-specific knowledge and innovation (Sennett, 2006; Sennett, 1997). New Capitalism arises from the ideologies of neoliberalism based on privatization, a reliance on “free” markets, deregulation, the reemergence of the dominance of private investment in controlling labor, and the transnational transfer of goods and services. As Stiglitz (2012) argues, free markets without the restraint of government concentrate power in the ultra rich and destabilize professional expertise by capitalizing micro aspects of practice so that professionals and laborers alike are paid for piecework. As Apple (2007) wrote, “the movement toward marketization and choice requires the production of standardized data based on standardized processes and products so that comparisons can be made and so that consumers have relevant information to make choices” (p. 111).

The interplay between New Capitalism and inclusive education reform has been explained from a conceptual and anecdotal point of view, aided by quantitative and policy analyses (e.g., Graham & Jahnukainen, 2011; Liasidou, 2008; Slee, 2011). Less attention has been paid to how New Capitalism work practices shape school professionals’ understanding and implementation of an inclusive education agenda, their relationships with colleagues and their own work, as well as their understandings of students who struggle to learn. This paper addresses these knowledge gaps by examining the case of an urban school that partnered with a university teacher education program to work towards inclusive education. In particular, we examine the impact of one New Capitalism technology, i.e., performativity and its associated auditing practices and artifacts, on teachers’ professional visions for inclusive education in one school.

In the followings sections, we outline a definition of inclusive education, discuss the emergence of New Capitalism work practices in education, and theorize inclusive education as a situated practice. Then, we turn to describe our methods of inquiry and present our findings

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## Outlining an Inclusive Education Agenda

Inclusive education has been a global movement in response to the systemic exclusion of those considered different from the dominant culture of schools (e.g., racial, language, religious, and ethnic minorities, females, students with disabilities, and students from low-income backgrounds). Being different is highly consequential as it has historically been associated with deviance, deficit and exclusion (Erevelles, 2011). Since the *Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policy and Practice in Special Needs Education* (UNESCO, 1994), inclusive education has become a buzzword with multiple meanings (Thomas & O'Hanlon, 2005). As Peter Clough stated, inclusive education "is not a single movement. It is made up of many strong currents of belief, many different local struggles and a myriad forms of practice" (Clough, 2000, p. 6). The wide range of definitions and interpretations of inclusive education is largely due to how this movement is interpreted and implemented in culturally, politically, and socially charged contexts (Artiles, Kozleski, & Waitoller, 2011). For instance, while in the U.S. inclusive education has been defined as access to the general education curriculum for students with disabilities, within the international community it has had a broader equity agenda for *all* marginalized students (Artiles & Dyson, 2005). Furthermore, definitions of inclusive education have ranged from assimilationist approaches to more transformative ones that aim to question, critique and change the normative parameters of the dominant culture of the schools (Artiles, Harris-Murri, & Rostenberg, 2006).

In addition, conceptualizations of inclusive education have been criticized for their minimal attention to the complexities of intersecting forms of exclusion and the role of culture and geography in producing ever-changing margins and peripheries (Artiles & Kozleski, 2007; Waitoller & Artiles, 2013; Slee, 2011). Exclusion emerges through the interaction of multiple factors (Crenshaw, 1991). The braid of ability, race/ethnicity, gender, language, and social class differences has been largely documented, and it has negatively affected students from ethnic and linguistic minorities (Artiles, 2011). These students tend to experience intersecting forms of exclusion (Crenshaw, 1991; Erevelles & Minear, 2010). For instance, the overrepresentation of ethnic and linguistic minorities in special education has been documented in various countries such as Australia (Sweller, Graham, & Van Bergen, 2012), Austria (Luciak & Biewer, 2011), Germany (Löser & Werning, 2011), England (Dyson & Kozleski, 2008), and the U.S. (Office of Special Education Programs, 2011). Furthermore, in the U.S., students from ethnic and linguistic minorities (i.e., African Americans, Latinos, and English Language Learners) receiving special education services are more likely to be placed in more segregated settings (Fierros & Conroy, 2002; Sullivan, 2011), are more likely to be suspended from school (Skiba, Poloni-Staudinger, Gallini, Simmons, & Feggings-Azziz, 2006), and are less likely to enroll in a four-year college than White students receiving special education (Wagner, Newman, Cameto, & Levine, 2006). An inclusive education agenda that only focuses on one form of difference (e.g., being Latino *or* a student with disabilities) will not be able to fully to address the complex needs of students who embody multiple forms of difference (Waitoller & Kozleski, 2013).

To address the ambiguities and intricacies of inclusive education policy and practice, Waitoller and colleagues (Waitoller & Artiles, 2013; Waitoller & Kozleski, 2013) advanced the following definition of inclusive education based on Fraser's (2008) three-dimensional view of justice:

The inclusive education movement should constitute an ongoing struggle toward (a) the *redistribution* of access to and participation in quality opportunities to learn, (b) the *recognition* and valuing of all student differences as reflected in content, pedagogy, and assessment tools, and (c) the creation of more opportunities for non-dominant

groups to advance claims of educational exclusion and their respective solutions (*representation*). (Waitoller & Artiles, p. 322)

According to this definition, the three pillars of inclusive education (i.e., redistribution, recognition, and representation) need to work together simultaneously to examine and dismantle intersecting forms of exclusion. Furthermore, when examining and dismantling the different forms of exclusion, it is important to be mindful of its fluid and dynamic nature. Exclusion is a shifting target. People engaging with an inclusive education agenda need to be “cultural vigilantes” (Corbett & Slee, 2000, p. 134) that continuously examine how margins and centers are produced, reproduced, and hybridized in the existing sociocultural and political contexts. Particular attention needs to be paid to how exclusion shifts across geographical spaces and time even within the same setting (e.g., classroom, school) (Heminway & Armstrong, 2012).

## **New Capitalism Work Practices in Education**

New Capitalism promotes a ubiquitous management system that is replicated widely across organizations and institutions, including schools (Ball, 1998). Several aspects of New Capitalism are found currently in educational policies and practices and include the following: (a) an emphasis on informational technologies to improve quality, (b) a focus on product customization, and (c) use of communities of practice. In each section, we discuss the idealized intentions behind implementation of incomplete, ineffective, or rebranded New Capitalism practices that fail to live up to the hype and often impede progress towards advancing inclusive education.

### **Improving Quality Through Informational Technologies**

In contrast to old forms of capitalism such as Fordism (Jessop, 2001) that were more concerned with mass production, New Capitalism work practices focus on developing high quality and competitive products and services (Demings, 1982). This focus on quality is reflected in educational policies. In the U.S., since the enactment of accountability reforms such as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB, 2001) and the latest reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004), there has been a rhetorical shift from access to educational services to the quality of such services. For instance, the purpose of Title I: Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged states that, “this title is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a *high-quality* education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging State academic achievement standards and state academic assessments” (NCLB, 2011, emphasis added by authors). However, quality practice is more than setting bars and measuring how closely organizations are able to meet those standards. In fact, this overemphasis on outcome measurement has led to a wide-scale cheating, inaccurate reporting of data, and a relentless focus on scores *at the expense* of time and effort spent on meaningful changes to what is taught, to whom, and in what ways (Henig, 2013).

New Capitalism relies on new informational technologies to improve quality of services and products (Ball, 2003; Gee, Hull, & Lankshear, 1996). There is an emphasis on the use of science and statistics to document, chart, and classify quality, and in doing so, pinpoint quality issues. However, because the metrics are, at best, incomplete, and, typically, not in sync with the daily routines and practices of schooling, the measurement usually has little impact on the design and delivery of learning while weighing heavily on resource allocation and distribution (Henig, 2013). A number of countries including the U.S. have invested in massive production of quantitative measures of “quality”—a continuous construction of symbolic work—being produced in order to have something to inspect (McDermott, Edgar, & Scarloss, 2011). For instance, U.S. schools are required to conduct and report a wide range of assessment measures including students’ scores (disaggregated

by sub-groups) on state high-stakes tests, dropout rates, graduation rates, and the percentages of students with disabilities included in general education classrooms. The data from these measures serve as proxies for education quality. It is assumed that the better the academic scores of a school, the better the quality of that school. But, since socio-economic status is a power predictor of school accountability performance, the degree to which accountability scores measure the value added by the school to what students know and are able to do is questionable (Nichols & Berliner, 2007). Quality is quantified, measured, and used to evaluate and make comparisons between schools and districts. These quantitative measures of performance not only serve to evaluate, praise or punish schools, but are also meant to help parents select schools for their children.

The promises associated with measuring quality and keeping schools accountable have fallen short, at best, and have had detrimental consequences at worst. A full critique of these promises is beyond the purpose of this paper and has been extensively covered by other scholars (e.g., Apple, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 2004; Lipman, 2011). Some of these consequences, however, are worth mentioning. For instance, current reforms based on measuring school quality and accountability have tended to negatively affect racial and linguistic minorities (Kucsera & Orfield, 2014). The schools attended by these communities have the greatest needs and the least human and financial resources (Anyon, 2005). In spite of these disadvantages, these schools are identified as underperforming (or low-quality) and punished for failure to comply with accountability mandates, further marginalizing teachers and students attending those schools. A common response to the accountability pressures to raise students' scores has been for schools to narrow their curriculum and teach to the high-stake standardized test at the expense of offering a rich and comprehensive curriculum (Darling-Hammond, 2004). This type of curricular decision provides racial and linguistic minority students with a reductive education that focuses primarily on learning basic reading and mathematical skills.

Furthermore, annual sanctions accumulated over time may result in closures of neighborhood schools and firing all school staff. As a result, school communities are disrupted and dismantled (Lipman, 2011). Borrowing from McDermott et al. (2011), the more schools are promised equity, the more they get punished for not obtaining it. The equity agenda that is key to inclusive education falls to the side, as "those" children who are perceived different, are seen as the potential hazards to achieving high scores on state-wide accountability measures. Thus, classroom teachers and school leaders are hard pressed to welcome inclusive education when they are constrained by accountability measures.

Paradoxically, the emphasis on transparency to inform consumers' decision-making has had the reverse effect. Families and community members have difficulty understanding publically available information. There is evidence that schools have excluded certain students through assignments to special education classes, language exceptions, missing scores, and other mechanisms that leave out low achievers, especially ELLs (Heilig & Darling-Hammond, 2008). Nichols and Berliner (2007) indicated that some schools commit fraud during testing in order to comply with accountability mandates. Some of the examples provided by Nichols and Berliner (2007) included but were not limited to handing out copies of the test or test items to teachers before the test, giving tips and coaching students during the test, erasing and changing test answers, changing students' identification numbers, and failing to count students as drop-outs if the district was not able to confirm that a non-enrolled student had exited the school system.

### **The Strive for Customization: Narrowing Students' Identities**

New Capitalism products are developed to satisfy the demand of certain *kinds* of people (Gee et al., 1996). Constant information about customer needs must flow into the hands of

designers to differentiate services and products. In education, this is reflected in an increased interest in differentiated instruction as a way to address diversity. Although differentiated instruction has been established as an ideal practice in special education, general education teachers have only recently begun to differentiate instruction rather than teach to the average student (Rose, Meyer, & Hitchcock, 2006). For instance, in their work on differentiation, Tomlinson and colleagues (2003) asked teachers to create multiple kinds of tasks that would allow students with differing skills sets to engage in learning with modulated pace, varied materials, and differing expectations for learning outcomes. These learning designs opened up the potential for general education teachers to acknowledge learning differences among students and to plan and teach accordingly. For this level of differentiation to occur, teachers had to understand the differences among their students, categorize them, and address them through ongoing careful inspection.

In effort to respond to the diverse needs of students, measures of performance and progress have become more sophisticated and frequent in schools. Evidence of this is the widespread use of the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) (Good & Kaminski, 2002) to monitor students' emerging reading skills, intervene early to prevent reading difficulties, and help teachers work differentially with their students throughout the school year. In addition, practices such as Response to Intervention (RtI) (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006) highlight the link between curriculum based measurement and other forms of progress monitoring and differentiation of specific instructional approaches to address diverse needs of students. One of the shortcomings of this type of measurement practices is that they focus exclusively on students' abilities to respond to concrete, isolated academic tasks (e.g., decoding a word). This distills students' complex knowledge and experiences, and focuses teachers' efforts on teaching basic skills while limiting the opportunities to engage students with the curriculum in ways that would capitalize on students' out-of school knowledge and practices (Artiles, Bal, & King, 2010). Thus, differentiation, instead of tailoring to unique circumstances, is another way of putting students in particular boxes.

### **Workers and Communities of Practice: Distant Control and Self-Surveillance**

Finally, as Gee (2000) pointed out, both New Capitalism and educational reforms include core notions of *communities of practice* (Wenger, 1998). Communities of practice consist of groups of people whose common bonds are forged through commitment and shared activity around a joint endeavor and goal. In a community of practice, members learn together as they engage in a common endeavor. Their knowledge is tacit and distributed among the members of the community (Wenger, 1998). In New Capitalism, communities of practice have been appropriated as forms of control and distribution of labor rather than as emancipatory practices as they were originally conceived. New Capitalism promotes the dismantling of middle level management, pushing responsibility down to low-level workers (Ball, 1998). New Capitalism, thus, demands knowledgeable workers that work in teams to assess themselves, appraise quality, take corrective action, and plan for improvement (Gee et al., 1996). The search for quality is considered an endless process in which teams of workers continuously revise and improve quality through the collective examination of quantitative data and ongoing innovation of their practices (Demings, 1982).

While front-line workers engage in these activities, they rarely have the opportunity to question their meta-meaning and their impact on foundational social justice issues. This would require an awareness of who benefits from such highly technical and collective efforts, what social agendas are being pursued, and how power hierarchies are established and entrenched. On one hand, workers have remarkable control over the means of production. On the other, they have very little opportunity to analyze or critique its impact.

In this paper, we describe how New Capitalism shapes the appropriation and implementation of inclusive education. We pay attention to how New Capitalism work practices mediate professional visions (Goodwin, 1994) of inclusive education. To achieve this, we theorize inclusive education as a situated practice within which a specific type of professional vision is constructed and shaped.

## **Theorizing Inclusive Education as a Situated Practice: Forming a Professional Vision**

Becoming a member of a professional community involves adhering to a particular professional vision. Goodwin (1994) called *a professional vision*—“socially organized ways of seeing and understanding events that are answerable to the distinctive interests of a particular profession” (p. 606). For instance, a teacher and a doctor observe the same student/patient (i.e., the object of their profession) quite differently. The former may examine students’ learning and knowledge while the latter will assess potential health issues. A professional vision, thus, provides a cognitive framework to understand the knowledge, skills, and practices rooted in the trajectory of a professional community (e.g., special education, teachers in a school) (Goodwin, 1994, 2002). It is a contested term that has been associated with attempts to promote, regulate, and control the work of teachers (Apple, 2007). A professional vision legitimates practices and policies that control the daily work of teachers, setting boundaries to the possibilities of being certain kinds of teachers. Thus, the term professional, as used in this paper, is not an absolute or ideal, but rather a combination of various forms of thinking and acting that are socially constructed and contested by professional communities (Ozga & Lawn, 1981). Following this understanding of professionalism, it is important to pay attention to how members in these communities construct and reproduce their professional vision.

This ongoing repositioning of professional vision has important implications for understanding how New Capitalism has shaped discourse practices in schools. As the artifacts of New Capitalism permeate schools and shape a professional vision for inclusive education, teacher communities of practice committed to inclusive education alter their discursive patterns, roles, and relationships. Therefore, the means of work (the activities and tools that are made available within a community) have instrumental effects on actions that are either encouraged or discouraged. The introduction and use of new artifacts shape teachers’ understandings of their work. The contradictions between ideologies are managed through the primacy of particular tool sets and discourses. Furthermore, power and resistance play important roles in the dynamics of communities of practice.

Based on our theoretical framework, our research question was the following: How does New Capitalism mediate the formation of a professional vision for inclusive education? To answer this question, we drew from a larger research project that examined a professional learning school initiative for inclusive education.

## **Methods**

### **The Context**

A professional learning school partnership was created between a university and an urban school located in a southwestern school district named Green Valley Elementary. The aim of this partnership was to transform Green Valley Elementary for inclusive education through professional learning and practices mediated by teacher residents, site coordinators, and site professors. A main



purpose of the partnership was to create a community with various levels of expertise that worked towards a common goal of providing access, participation, and positive academic and social outcomes for *all* students.

Members of the university faculty called *site professors* worked in each classroom alongside the teacher residents, developing a shared understanding of inclusive education and implementing practices needed for inclusive education. Seven of the teachers working at Green Valley Elementary were enrolled in a masters' program to prepare teacher leaders for inclusive education. The coursework in the program was designed to engage the teacher residents in critical learning and analysis of both theory and instructional methodologies. The coursework lasted four semesters (i.e., spring, summer, fall, and spring). The curriculum of each semester was based on a theme— *identity, culture, learning* and *assessment* (Kozleski & Waitoller, 2010). The teacher residents introduced new and divergent knowledge into their classrooms and school communities while bringing the contexts and experiences from their classrooms back into the university courses and discourse.

Initiated by university faculty, the grant application that funded the project was jointly designed by the university and school personnel. Some of the key school personnel who assisted in the program conception and design subsequently left the school prior to receiving funding. Once funding was received, the proposed partnership was renegotiated with new personnel. The desired level of learning and shared commitment towards building inclusive school communities embedded in the original partnership was never achieved. Once the grant was implemented, leadership for the project came from the university faculty with periodic interest from the school personnel. Describing this relationship as a partnership, thus, is probably an overstatement. It was a relationship with sporadic collaboration and with parallel efforts and interpretations about the partnership. As a result, people who were asked to carry out the grant had different levels of commitment and understanding of the intellectual task that was intended, and the school and the university adhered to separate agendas.

**Green Valley Elementary School.** Green Valley was selected using principles of *naturalistic inquiry* (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) in which the research design is emergent and the research site is selected purposefully (Patton, 1990). In particular, we found Green Valley to be a *critical case* (Patton, 1990), i.e., a case “that can make a point quite dramatically or are, for some reason, particularly important in the scheme of things” (Patton, 1990, p. 175). For instance, teachers and administrators at Green Valley were grappling with understanding inclusive education amidst implementing work practices of New Capitalism. Furthermore, Green Valley students' demographics afforded us to examine how a school grappling with competing agendas addressed the needs of students coming from racial and ethnic groups that have experienced injustices based on misdistribution, misrecognition, and misrepresentation (Fraser, 2008). In addition, Green Valley was a school that was part of a larger study in which we noticed an emerging narrative around monitoring the progress of students.

Green Valley was located in a low-income neighborhood with a long history of Mexican and Yaqui settlement. Twenty two percent of the school enrollment was of Yaqui background and 60% of students were Latinos, while only nine and eight percent of students were Black and White, respectively. English Language Learners (ELLs) composed 46% of the student enrollment and 84% of students qualified for free or reduced lunch. Students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) accounted for 11% of the school enrollment. Of the 45 teachers at Green Valley Elementary, only one had an emergency certification. Green Valley met its own Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) thresholds based on the state's requirement for continued annual improvement of each school. In 2008, for instance, 63% of the students passed the state test in math, while 58% passed it in reading

and 71% of the students passed the state writing test. These passing percentages were higher than the school's previous year's performance.

In Green Valley Elementary, students with IEPs who were identified with mild disabilities (labels ranged from learning disabilities, mild behavioral disorders, and speech and language disabilities to intellectual disabilities) spent most of their time in the general education classroom. Some of these students were pulled out briefly from their classrooms to receive specialized instruction based on their IEPs. Green Valley also had four segregated classrooms (i.e., self-contained) for students in need of intensive and comprehensive educational supports (i.e., students with more severe cognitive disabilities and students with autism). This self-contained special education program was called Buddies. Approximately 40 students bussed to Green Valley were placed in these self-contained classrooms. A special education teacher and two teaching assistants staffed each classroom. These students joined their general education peers during physical education and art. Some students also participated in general education science, social studies, and math and reading.

At the time of this study, Green Valley Elementary had begun a process to become more inclusive. As a result of the professional learning school partnership, the school had provided time and resources for one of the special education teachers to co-teach with a 5<sup>th</sup> grade classroom teacher so that students with mild disabilities could remain in general education throughout the day. Six of Green Valley's teachers participated in the professional learning school masters' program to become teacher leaders for inclusive education.

Following district wide mandates the year the study was conducted, Green Valley implemented several initiatives to provide opportunities to learn for all students. For instance, Green Valley's staff began to form Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) based on Richard DuFour's model (2004). This model emphasizes the use of professional collaboration, common formative assessments, quantifiable data, and benchmarking to plan for improvement in student achievement. In this model, all teachers use the same measurement devices so that grade-level comparisons can be made. Following this model, Green Valley's teachers received training from their school district in (a) creating common formative assessments, (b) working in teams to analyze students' performance data (c) creating graphic data displays. Organized in grade level teams, Green Valley's teachers evaluated their own performances and plan for improvement. Importantly, the performance data of students with special needs were included in the graphic displays of their respective grade levels. This was an effort to promote inclusive education. A key assessment used in these grade-level activities was DIBELS (Good & Kaminski, 2002). DIBELS is a set of short measures used to evaluate and monitor the acquisition of early reading skills such as phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, accuracy and fluency, reading comprehension, and vocabulary. The main purpose of this assessment is to identify students who struggle with early reading skills so that appropriate support can be provided to prevent reading difficulties (Good & Kaminski, 2002).

### **Participants and Data Sources**

Participants were selected using a purposeful sampling (Patton, 1990). Participants included Green Valleys' principal and two language coaches, two university site professors and four out of the six teacher residents enrolled in the masters' program who agreed to participate in the study (see Table 1). Data collection lasted 12 months. Data sources included school, district, and university documents and artifacts, an entry and exit interview with each participant (total of 18), over 50 field observations gathered by site professors, 14 videos of teachers' classroom practices, and 16 video-stimulated interviews with teachers participating in the masters' program. Interviews were semi-structured and interview questions were open ended (e.g., tell me about your school) (Kvale, 1996).

Though the interviewers had a set of guiding questions, the questionnaire was flexible, allowing new questions to be brought up according to the specific characteristics of the ongoing interview (Kvale, 1996).

Table 1

*List and Characteristics of the Participants of the Study*

Name	Role	Grade	Gender
Beth	Principal	n/a	Female
Patricia	Language Coach	n/a	Female
Karina	Language Coach	n/a	Female
Margot	Site Professor	n/a	Female
Marlene	Site Professor	n/a	Female
Kevin	General educator	5	Male
Kelly	General educator	1	Female
Nazareth	Special educator	3-5	Female
Dalia	General educator	1	Female

### Data Analysis

We applied analytical tools from Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to answer our research question. CDA is based on the assumption that language is an irreducible part of social life and research and, thus, the analysis of discourse needs to connect language with social practices (Fairclough, 1995). A particular discursive event—any instance of language use—according to CDA scholars, is in a dialectical relationship with the situations, institutions, practices, and the social structures that frame it (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). Another major concern of CDA is the ideological effects of texts—how they inculcate and sustain particular representations of the world that contribute to establishing and maintaining social relations of power and domination (Fairclough, 2003). CDA, thus, provides a framework to account for the production and interpretation of text, the internal structure of the text, and the relationship between textual and discursive practices with the wider socio-political structures of power, hegemony, and domination. Thus, CDA afforded us to examine how New Capitalism ideology and practices mediated the formation of a professional vision for inclusive education.

First, following Fairclough's (2003) guidance for discourse analysis, we examined the following textual features of the data sources noted above.

**Speech functions.** We examined what a text was trying to achieve (e.g., demand, ask, offer, claim, etc.), the different move exchanges included in these functions (e.g., activity exchange, knowledge exchange) and the types of statements used (e.g., fact, prediction, evaluative, etc.).

**Key word analysis.** During the analysis of key words, we used NVIVO 8 to identify the most frequently used words in interviews and documents. Then, we looked at the textual context of that word to understand its meaning.

**Ideology and Phraseology.** During the analysis of ideologies, phraseology of social discourses, we examined all data retrieved to tease out the ideas, vocabulary, and phrases that were

characteristic of particular social discourses. For instance, the words *efficiency*, *flexibility*, and *quality* are related to New Capitalism (Gee et al., 1996).

**Analysis of pictures.** We examined the cultural work of images displayed at Green Valley Elementary (e.g., data wall) and how people made sense of and understood those images (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996).

**Representation of social actors and actions.** We examined whether social actors (e.g., principal, students, and teachers) are represented in people's talk and images. We also examined how these social actors were related to events and actions.

**Examination of pronoun usage.** We looked for the use of pronouns such as "us," "we," and "they" to analyze how participants, pictures, and school documents drew social boundaries among the school community.

The analysis of textual features provided the basis for forming initial codes. For instance, various views about quality, inclusive education, students, student data, among others, yielded by the analysis of key words, representations of actors, and phraseology and ideology, were used to open code (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) the data sources previously described. Then, we used axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), writing memos about codes and their relationship, and reducing the amount of codes by comparing and contrasting them with one another. These memos were written by connecting codes and their relationships with previous literature on inclusive education, political economy of education, and socio-cultural theory (e.g., Cole, 1996; Gee et al., 1996 ; Goodwin, 1994; Smyth, Dow, Hattam, Reid, & Shacklock, 2000, among others). This was an iterative process of moving back and forth between the codes and the memos. This resulted in sequential and deeper analysis of the data in which overarching conceptual categories emerged. This level of analysis provided an intermediate step between coding and developing the first draft of a manuscript (Charmaz & Mitchell, 2001). We periodically reviewed the research questions to keep the analyses on track. After developing the final code patterns, we reviewed the whole data set to re-examine codes and relationships, generating theoretical assertions that answered our research question. For the analysis presented in this paper, we took one of the conceptual categories of the larger research project of the partnership (i.e., New Capitalism and inclusive education), examining it further using the theoretical framework described in this paper. This was congruent with our emergent research design (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). That is, as new themes emerged from the analysis, some contexts and events were selected for further examination. There were other findings that did not relate to New Capitalism and that were published in other papers (see Waitoller, 2014; Waitoller & Kozleski, 2013).

The research team was composed of five members. Each data source was initially coded by two researchers and conceptual categories were developed upon consensus with entire team. Weekly meetings were used to resolve coding issues that emerged. In addition, to ensure the credibility (Skrtec, 1985) of the study we used data triangulation and member checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), persistent observation (Skrtec, 1985), and peer debriefing (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) strategies. Finally, two experienced researchers with expertise in qualitative inquiry and New Capitalism provided feedback to our analysis and then we addressed their comments accordingly.

## Findings

Our analysis indicated that New Capitalism shaped a professional vision (Goodwin, 1994) for inclusive education. This was achieved through the deployment of certain technologies such as performativity and its graphic displays of quality and auditing practices. Performativity refers to a technology that uses displays of data (or we could also say displays of quality) and judgments and

comparisons as vehicles for controlling quality performances, correcting errors, and changing practice (Ball, 2003). As Butler (1997) noted, performativity does not only refer to spoken acts, but also to text and graphic representations. Graphic displays of quality were ubiquitous in Green Valley Elementary. “It’s posted in their classrooms, and then it’s posted in the data room, so it’s pretty hard to ignore it anymore,” said Beth, the principal of Green Valley. Indeed, there was a requirement in Green Valley Elementary for the production and display of information and monitoring systems:

In a wall located right after the entry hall of Green Valley there was a bulletin board containing separate sheets of paper that had bar graphs of each teacher’s classroom performance as indicated by DIBELS and two other computer-based state-wide tests that evaluated students’ reading comprehension and math skills. (Site professor field note, March 15)

District year benchmarks were also posted in every classroom, the staff room, and hallways (see Figure 1). In addition, teachers were required to graph and post their students’ data. As Beth stated: “the kids graph the results, and the teachers graph the results...I made them all sign a silly little ‘I will be timely with my data.’ ‘I will have it turned this year.’” (Interview, December 13)

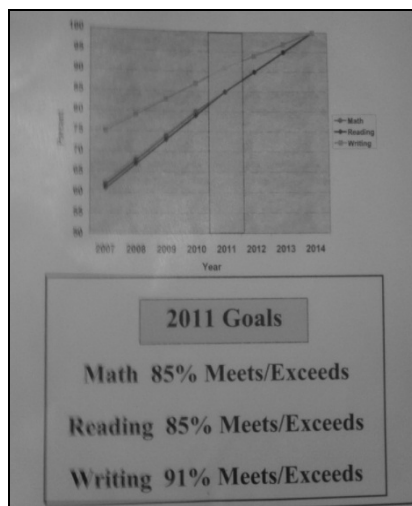


Figure 1. School district benchmarks for academic progress.

The significance of performativity was that it contributed to developing a professional vision (Goodwin, 1994, 2002). Graphic displays of quality acted as artifacts that mediated relationships among school personnel and their understanding of their work, inclusive education, and ethnic minority students struggling to learn. Goodwin (1994) reminded us of the central importance of graphic representations in the developing of a professional vision: “Instead of mirroring spoken language, these graphical representations complement it, using the distinctive characteristics of the material world to organize phenomena in ways spoken language cannot” (p. 611). In Green Valley, graphic displays spoke more than words, and did what verbal language could not have done: they collected a wide range of students’ performances onto a relative small surface, transforming them into auditable quality displays that indicated the performativity of teachers and students. The production and use of quality displays reduced teaching and learning to a self-referential commodity, produced to be exchanged and inspected. Education for *all* students became inspection of *all* teachers and students. No stone was left unturned. Auditing and inspection occurred in three layers: (a) administrators to teachers, (b) teachers to each other, and (c) teachers to students. In the following sections, we analyze these three forms of auditing and inspection.

### School Administrators Auditing Teachers Thorough Data Displays

Graphic displays of quality allowed administrators to audit and inspect teachers' work. Beth, the principal of Green Valley Elementary, articulated this notion in the following quote:

After a while data speaks for itself, and, you know, 'Well you're here and all the rest of your peers are here.' Okay. You know, and you gave them all the same assessment so it wasn't different questions, and it wasn't different information. (Interview, June 4)

In this quote, Beth played out a scenario in which she was telling a teacher that her data was falling behind her peers. The data from students' DIBELS scores were a common indicator that transformed teaching into an auditable commodity. Giving the same question and the same information, to paraphrase Beth, transformed all students' and teachers' performances into a common indicator (i.e., DIBELS scores). This converted—or better said, reduced—a complex and heterogeneous social phenomenon, such as student learning, into simple numbers that formed figures and graphics for the sake of auditing quality. It erased from the graphic display much of the “clutter” created by the multiple factors that shape students' performances, thus affording inspection and comparison of teachers' performances.

Data displays were treated as objective and neutral indicators of quality. It is noteworthy to point out that the principal eliminated other possible explanations for teacher's performance by stating that all the questions on the test were the same across the grade level. She said, “data speaks for itself” and later, “You know, and you gave them all the same assessment so it wasn't different questions, and it wasn't different information.” Data displays became objective devices that raised awareness and ongoing consciousness of irregularities and deficiencies that needed to be fixed. This objectivity contributed to the use of comparisons and corrections. The words *here* and *there* in Beth's quote indicated a place on the data wall in relationship to peers. As soon as a student's DIBELS score were obtained, they never stood alone, but rather they always stood in relation to all the other data. That is, the value of these scores had little meaning until its place on the wall indicated its standing in relation to other students' scores and the performance of the corresponding teacher. Scores were produced to be examined and compared; quality displays, thus, mediated teacher quality appraisal through comparisons among teachers.

In addition, quality displays served as moments of inspection and correction. Beth stated: So, trying to get rid of some of those obstacles. I think we've done a pretty good job of ironing out some of those kinks, so next year it's really just setting that precedence from day one that, “This is how we are doing business and it's expected that you do,” and just dealing with those people that will make it difficult. (Interview, June 4)

In the above quote, data serves as a rationalization for correcting teachers' practices. The metaphor of *ironing kinks* was a repetitive linguistic device used by Beth to refer to teacher management. Ironing kinks refers to getting rid of irregularities and deficiencies in teachers' practices. This signals the presence of New Capitalism work practices in which control is exercised at a distance (Ball, 1998). Teachers' performances were steered by the use of graphic displays of students' academic outcomes.

Yet, Beth also expressed that the administration's goal behind the displays of data was to help teachers become better teachers rather than judge their teaching:

I keep trying to, you know, this is not evaluative. I don't walk into your classroom and look at your graph and go, “Oh, my gosh. What happened to your class?” I look at it and say, “How can I support you?” Or “Gosh, why do you think your kids missed those answers? Let's go talk to so-and-so because obviously something

worked in that classroom, so let's go pull their materials and let's look at how we can teach it to your kids." (Interview, December 13)

She acknowledged, however, that teachers perceive this differently:

But again, when I'm there talking about their math graph, sometimes it's this, "Beth is here evaluating me." I try to take that out so they can be honest about those conversations, and sometimes I go because there are certain grade levels that I need to be there to keep them behaving. (Interview, December 13)

Similarly, Kevin, a teacher at Green Valley Elementary, stated:

The testing culture has made it that way. Instead of it being a tool, it's more of a judgment. You walk through the hallways and you see a little bar graph compared to everyone else's bar graph instead of really realizing that this is more a tool to assess your kids' needs than it is a pass/fail thing. (Interview, November 30<sup>th</sup>)

The purpose of these graphic displays, thus, was ambiguous. On one hand, they were heralded as non-evaluative and empowering tools. They allowed teachers to connect the impact of small changes in their instructional practices to students' outcomes. On the other hand, teachers perceived these graphic displays as judgmental and punitive, resulting in anxiety about the quality of their work. These are distinctive characteristics of New Capitalism and its striving for visibility (Ball, 2003). In New Capitalism, workers are constantly exposed to monitoring systems, creating a sense of being constantly judged by different means and people (Ball, 2003). Individuality is lost in a continuous narrowing of what counts and requires attention. The path to a defined and regulated script for inclusive education overlaps with the path to mutual and self-scrutiny.

### **Inspecting One's Stone: The Self-Reliant Worker**

Graphic displays of quality also mediated teachers' relationship with themselves. Through the technology of performativity, teachers became their own inspectors, correctors, and appraisers. Organized in grade level teams, teachers were required to meet every Friday to look at their data and discuss how to intervene to increase their students' scores. The language coach, Trina, and, sometimes, the principal, Beth, facilitated these meetings. The latter one stated,

I made them sign a contract. We will meet. We will turn in minutes when we're not with the coaches or with our math consultant. [...] They had to come up with team norms and turn those in. Everything's been really structured, but because we did all that structure up front, again, those things are just, they're just doing what they're supposed to be doing. When they meet with coaches, they talk about DIBELS, and they talk about statewide assessments. (Interview with Beth, December 13)

These meetings took place in the data room, located adjacent to Green Valley's staff lunchroom. Displays of each class and grade level DIBELS scores (Good & Kaminski, 2002) covered the walls from ceiling to floor. Additionally, the data displays included other state accountability related assessments (see Figure 2). Not surprisingly, the school staff referred to these displays as the *data walls*.



Figure 2. The data wall.

These data walls used distinctive characteristics of the material world to organize symbolic displays of quality (Goodwin, 1994). Figure 2 shows how these walls were divided into columns and rows. Each column represented a classroom, while each row represented the classification schemata of the DIBELS, i.e., intensive, strategic and at-benchmark. Each piece of paper on the wall represented a student and his/her DIBELS scores over time. Individual pieces of paper were moved up or down the rows of the data wall as DIBELS scores changed. The arrangement of these pieces of paper conveyed a judgment about each teacher's quality. A single rapid scan through the data wall informed viewers about those students were not meeting benchmarks and their corresponding teachers. Trina, the language coach, elaborated on data wall meetings:

We all meet in here [data room] as a grade, and we have three coaches—myself and two other coaches. We take out data, and we kind of strategize what we can do to help these kids. This is the end product [pointing to the data wall]. (Interview, December 16)

These meetings represented school efforts to implement PLCs to comply with standards and accountability reforms. Beth stated: “We’re following the PLC which is the professional learning community with the data that we’re doing; it’s really one and the same thing.”

Another key element of these meetings was an expectation that teachers would establish their own benchmarks (see Figure 3). Pointing out to the columns in the data wall representing the 5<sup>th</sup> grade team, Trina said the following:

If you can look down here, this is the fifth grade board here. At the very beginning of the year, they came in at 62 percent. What we did was, we met with the team and we asked them to have a goal in mind where they would want to be in the winter benchmark. So, they said that they wanted to be at 68 percent. They actually came in at 72 percent. So, they surpassed their goal and are doing extremely well. [...] So, that’s a huge percentage in growth there. Third grade—they surpassed their goal as well by seven percent. (Interview, December 16<sup>b</sup>)



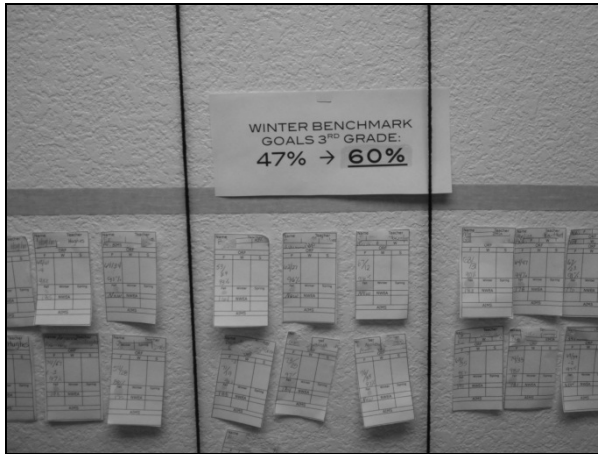


Figure 3. Benchmarks for grade level teams.

The materiality and concreteness of these benchmarks provided the administration and teachers themselves the means to compare and evaluate the performances of teachers against a certain standard. Benchmarks were tangible aids that marked a quantifiable horizon, indicating the path to inclusivity.

### No Stone Left Unturned: Inspecting and Profiling Students' Differences

Graphic displays of quality aimed also at structuring the school staff's perceptions of students. Trina further explained the use of the data wall, as she pointed to different sections of it:

Six hundred and some odd kids, and so we were just going through the data, and changing our data walls, and just doing all of that. This is what's most current now. So, the red down here represents the kids that we really have to look at seriously. They're in dire need. They need to be in the emergency room, more or less [...] like, if I was a doctor or something, these would need more of an emergency type of a situation. They'd need a lot more care. Of course, the ones on green—they're doing really well, but we still need to watch what they're doing. There's not as much care needed for them. Then, of course, the ones in the middle—we still have to watch them. (Interview, December 16)

Trina described the work that she did with grade level teams on Fridays, which resulted in creating quality displays of students sorted into different profiles. The data wall impacted teachers' orientation towards their work. Graphic displays of quality such as the data wall, thus, served as a *coding scheme* (Goodwin, 1994): a “systematic practice used to transform the world into the categories and events that are relevant to the work of the profession” (Goodwin, 1994, p. 608).

This coding scheme impacted the school staff's perception of students in at least three forms. First, the coding scheme reduced students to a single score (e.g., DIBELS score) that symbolized their ability to demonstrate a narrow skill (e.g., pronounce a compound word) that subsequently became disproportionately valuable. This was evident when Trina selected one of the student's slips that was pinned to the data wall (see Figure 2) and said:

We can come in here—for example, if you want to know about this one little boy, I can show you this and tell you exactly where this little boy has been. So, last year when he took his tests at the end of the school year, he ended up at a 190. He began again at a 190, and now he's at a 201 for his oral reading fluency. Here I can show you that he has 117, and he's made this growth up to 141. So, I mean we can tell you a lot about this child. (Interview, December 16)

In this quote, Trina described how the teachers developed knowledge about their students. She used the word *exactly* that indicates measuring precision and signifies quantification and objectiveness. Then she described this student's academic progress. Interestingly, she only used DIBELS data and then the data from a benchmark state assessment, though she claimed that the data wall tells "a lot about this child." In addition, Kevin, stated: "In the beginning of the year it was 104 words a minute. They all read 104 or more. Like I said, some of my kids were in the 140's and 150's" (Interview, June 3rd). DIBELS scores served to quantify and summarize each student's ability. The coding scheme, thus, reduced students' experiences to their performance on particular academics outcomes, guiding teachers to think about students in terms of quality indicators based on the quantification of student performances. It mediated the symbolic transformation from certain observable student behaviors into auditable assessment scores. As a result, the coding scheme simplified a complex perceptual field such as the social ecology of a classroom so that teachers could evaluate their own work. Yet, in doing so it ignores the breadth of engagements through which students participate over time and the trajectory of their participation as they work within the community of the classroom (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Second, once students were reduced to a single quantifiable measure of performance, they were profiled according to these narrow measures. Trina mentioned three ability profiles embedded in the coding scheme of the data wall. The students in the red were "intensive" kids, the students in the green were labeled as "at-benchmark" kids, and the students in the middle were called "strategic" kids. This ability schema was drawn from the DIBELS data system, using the metaphor of a stoplight to refer to the three color-coded categories: red, yellow, and green. Using this metaphor, some students could move on to the instructional level (i.e., the students with the green light) while some students needed to go with caution (i.e., the students with yellow light), and some students needed to stay at their current level until they mastered specific skills (e.g., identifying certain phonemes). Borrowing from Collins (2003), we refer to this mechanism as *ability profiling*—"an institutionally and socially sanctioned form of discrimination and segregation" (p. 192) that identifies deficits within each student.

Interestingly, Trina appropriated this metaphor, changing it to a medical metaphor from the transit one. She used the term "emergency room" to describe the needs of students at the intensive level. The ability profiling of these students required that they receive more intensive services. An emergency room, however, neither gives long-term care nor heals patients in the long-term. Emergency rooms focus on intensive but provisory treatment to stabilize the situation and prevent death. Long-term treatment and recovery come afterwards from other medical teams and departments. In schools, if students were assigned to be in a metaphorical instructional emergency room, it would mean that they would receive intensive but short-term treatment (e.g., a certain type of instruction such as word attack) to achieve just-in-time (Hutchins, 1988) benchmarks to comply with accountability policies. Trina indicated that all students were watched, including the ones in the "middle" (i.e., students at benchmark) and the ones in the green (i.e., students above benchmark). In a tightly controlled context, students were continuously monitored to evaluate what they needed to improve their scores on a specific *predictor* of reading proficiency (not a measure of reading performance). The data wall, thus, represented *a landscape of need* in which every single student was a subject to the intervention gaze—all students were the objects of treatment. Within the dominant professional vision, being an inclusive teacher meant constantly inspecting which students were falling behind.

Third, the coding scheme simplified the perceptual field so that certain kinds of instruction were assigned to certain kinds of students (Goodwin, 1994, 2002). Trina continued describing the instructional implications of this ability profiling: "We have them in interventions [for the students

in the emergency room]. We double dose them through our tier one and tier two, and then the coaches come in and do another tier” (Interview, December 16). Trina’s first words, “we have them in interventions” are noteworthy. The term interventions implied that something within each of these students needed to be fixed and demanded an external intervention. Referring to the intensity of interventions, Trina used another medical metaphor “double dose” as if these interventions were medicine prescribed to remediate students’ illnesses or deficits. The notion of intervention also suggests that learning occurs by repeated exposures to the same treatment. Double doses of interventions consisted of *skill and drill* exercises in the area of basic reading skills. For the students in remediation, the focus was on concrete skills.

In contrast, the students who were positioned within the green area of the data wall (at-benchmark students) were learning more abstract and complex tasks:

At the green level, most of them are working on reading novels and literature studies, and they’re doing literature studies as far as with—they’re doing author studies, and literature studies. They’re talking about the book, and they’re talking about all the literary elements of the book. What does the author mean by this? So, they’re talking all about that. So, what we’re trying to do with the benchmark kids is accelerate them even more. So, it’s really tough to keep on track of every single child, but we’re trying to do that, and this is the way that we’ve felt that it’s helping us better. (Interview, December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2010)

The students in the green zone had the opportunity to develop more advanced reading comprehension skills. Trina’s construction of the stoplight metaphor established a hierarchical relationship among the three ability profiles, positioning the students in green at the top of the ability hierarchy. At the end of this quote, Trina described the process of *accelerating* students that signaled at least two notions. First, as indicated by the use of pronoun “we” in Trina’s quote, the people responsible for accelerating students were the school staff. Second, students were conceptualized in static ways. Rather than active agents of their own learning, students received services that accelerated their learning. The notion of acceleration suggests that learning can be calibrated by specific controls. These controls allowed practitioners to regulate the speed at which students learned. Thus, labeling students accurately leads to the right intervention dosage or pressure on the accelerator. “Acceleration” also referred to the need for schools to intervene quickly with the intensive category of student in order to meet *just-in-time* benchmarks required by district mandates.

Teachers at Green Valley Elementary confirmed Trina’s explanation. For instance, Kelly stated:

Ms. Gomez has the kids who scored the lowest on DIBELS. It could be arranged from 15 to like 30. I would have the kids who were 30 to 60. The rest of them do like chapter books or a little bit harder concepts because the kids are a little bit higher. (Interview, March 1st)

In addition, Kevin offered the following perspective while talking about his lowest (intensive) students:

Not with this whole group. I’ve had other conversations. No, not specifically about slavery. A lot of the meaning just kind of washes over. They glean bits and pieces, but for this group that’s not an effective use of their time. Like when their parents, and we were at home, and we had all this time—sure. We could have those conversations, but I have them for half an hour. They have other things that are more beneficial to them during that half hour for their reading skills than to get into those deep philosophical conversations.

Students considered intensive were not afforded opportunities to engage in political and philosophical conversations as, according to teachers, the instructional time needed to be used in a more efficient manner so that all students could meet their learning benchmarks. This is not to say that the staff of the school did not care about students. Indeed, we witnessed the staff's sincere care for students apart from their test performances. For instance, many teachers came in before school to tutor students who were struggling with some concepts. However, graphic displays of quality such as the data wall mediated the school's institutional gaze so that only certain narrow views of abilities were privileged. The data wall led the school staff to focus on specific aspects of students and, in doing so, obscured other perspectives. Through active manipulation of the students' positionality on a single dimension of performance, perspectives on what counted as learning shifted. Additionally, ability profiling became the single most important tool for improving student performance.

## Discussion

Our analysis contributed to prior research by examining the effect of one New Capitalism technology, i.e., performativity, and its associated auditing practices and artifacts on the professional vision for inclusive education in one school. This affected teachers' relationship to and understanding of their work, inclusive education, and minority students who struggle to learn. From an inclusive education perspective, we must explore and examine the potential solutions to exclusion that emerge when teachers' agency is mediated by performativity's auditing practices and cultural artifacts. Thus, in the following sections we discuss the auditing practices occurring during teachers' Friday meetings and the potential of cultural artifacts (i.e., data wall) to mediate teachers' work towards greater inclusivity. We discuss these important aspects of our findings in light of the definition of inclusive education described in the introduction of this paper.

### Teachers Communities of Practice and the Dilemma of an Auditing Culture

Organized in grade level teams, teachers met every Friday to look at their data and discuss how to intervene to increase their students' scores. PLCs can be vehicles to examine and make sense of student data. Indeed, PLCs can be catalysts for emancipatory and participatory learning (see Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Gallucci, 2003) and for capacity building for reforms such as inclusive education (Ainscow, Howes, Farrell, & Frankham, 2003). We question, however, whether the appropriation of PLCs within New Capitalism practices of auditing and inspection results in expanding designs for learning and creating scaffolds for learners with differing learning needs. We also wonder if the relationships between teachers and administrators and among colleagues in the era of New Capitalism circumscribe, if not prevent, learning spaces that allow for risk and failure to become a springboard for more inclusive learning.

At a first glance, those weekly opportunities for teachers to come together to assess student learning and refine their instruction in response to the data may be viewed as empowering and self-actualizing. Such activities may suggest that auditing is an open, participatory, enabling, and non-contentious process (Shore & Wright, 1999). Yet, relationships based on judgment and inspection functioned as forms of coercion. That is, when teachers were both the scrutinized and the scrutinizer, they were required to do so by using the assessment tools and broad benchmarks of their institutions (e.g., district accountability benchmarks). Furthermore, although teachers set their own benchmark plans for their own improvement, schools were subjects to severe sanctions if they fell short of making AYP. These practices created a "school paranoia." The main objective of transforming teaching into auditable commodity was not to empower teachers, but rather to push the pressure and responsibility for students' improvement down to individual teachers, so that

someone could be blamed or praised for the failures or victories of the school. The appropriation of PLCs for inclusive education under New Capitalism practices disguised the hierarchical, paternalistic, and punitive relationship between the administration (including the district, and state) and teachers (Shore, 2008; Shore & Wright, 1999).

Engeström (2008) noted that there is some contradiction in the fabric of work teams (e.g., teacher grade level teams). On one hand, work teams are seen as fertile ground for nurturing knowledgeable workers responsible for their own work and enhancing their skills to better prepare them for future jobs. Yet, on the other hand, they are used to control and transmit the ideological values of management (e.g., school district). Barker (1993) used the term *concertive control* to identify the type of managerial power indexed in self-managed teams. Concertive control relies on the internalization of managerial values (Barker, 1993). Teachers working in grade level teams, for instance, reached negotiated consensus on how to instruct students who were underperforming according to institutional values. Over time, these value-loaded practices became objective and rationalized (Barker, 1993). In other words, the values and practices of institutions are no longer consciously followed but automatically performed (Engeström, 2008) and controlling teaching is exercised at a safe distance (Ball, 2003).

Yet, performative practices leave spaces for resisting normative meanings and practices (Butler, 1997). Performativity constrains possibilities for action and thinking, but it does not determine them. At Green Valley, some teachers resisted performativity. For instance, some teachers produced their graphic displays from fabricated data, thus defeating the purpose of making information visible and transparent for decision making. On many occasions (university seminars, conversations with researchers and colleagues), teachers expressed their discomfort with different forms of inspection. The Green Valley data suggest that resistance rather than learning became the primary feature of teacher groups. Data fabrication and counter narratives absorbed the greatest share of teachers' collaborative work time at Green Valley. Thus, teachers missed the opportunities to generate inclusive and participatory practices and nurture deeper relationships among school personnel.

A possible explanation for this shortcoming is that teachers were not encouraged to have a reflective stance towards their practice. Instead, they were expected to think about their teaching practices in terms of what works best, as indicated by quantifiable indicators such as DIBELS. For instance, teachers were not engaged in discussions about whether DIBELS provide robust information to make decisions about educational experiences for students. DIBELS scores were produce to be inspected—not to question their meaning. The accuracy of the information presented in graphic displays of quality was not the objective of Friday meetings. Rather, the main objective was to decide what instructional practices were effective in improving students' performance on those measures of quality. Performativity encouraged the search for strategic improvements based on short-term effects, as illustrated by the emergency room metaphor. Gee et al. (1996) authors pointed out that New Capitalism is trapped in its own paradox: How to give flexibility and empower workers without having them question the values and ideologies of the institutions in which they work? According to Gee et al. (1996), New Capitalism work practices try to create consensus by spreading core values that guide social practices, creating a vision that workers can believe in. The goal is to induct workers and work-teams into an ethic-based rationale. In the case of Green Valley Elementary, teachers engaged with New Capitalism work practices because they thought that they were working towards the benefit of *all* their students.

Yet, teachers were kept from examining and dismantling complex forms of exclusion based on misdistribution, misrepresentation and misrecognition. While the auditing practices of New Capitalism aim to make teachers practices more visible and transparent, they actually made them

more opaque as the complex social relationships, interactions, and the social ecology of the classrooms were hidden beneath the lure of the objectivity of quantifiable performance indicators. In the culture of audit what cannot be standardized and quantified has little value (Power, 1997). Students' cultural, language, ethnic, and ability differences, thus, are redefined or converted into the neutral language of numbers. We argue that auditing progress becomes a *quantifying ability differences*—narrowing the scope of students' experiences towards the realm of differences that do not threaten the political and economic order. Thus, complex forms of exclusion are jettison from teachers' professional vision. We further examine this issue as we discuss the role of the data wall in mediating the construction of a professional vision for inclusive education.

### **The Data Wall as a Cultural Artifact: Mediating Affirmative Remedies for Misdistribution**

The data wall was a key artifact in mediating teachers' professional vision. To discuss this finding, we draw from Fraser's (1997) two broad remedies to address injustices (e.g., educational exclusion based on misrecognition and misdistribution): *affirmative* remedies and *transformative* remedies. The former focuses on the outcomes of unjust social arrangements without changing the underlying social order that generates them. The later one, in contrast, aims to correct injustices by restructuring the social order. So, while affirmation focuses on outcomes, transformation addresses the root causes (Fraser, 1997). In Green Valley Elementary, teachers-operating-with-performativity's cultural artifacts resulted in additive remedies to exclusion based on misdistribution of educational opportunities. Teachers focused their attention on those students that traditionally have "fallen through the cracks," providing access to a metaphorical emergency room in which students received intensive interventions to raise their scores on certain assessment measures. In other words, teachers working with the data wall redistributed access to educational opportunities to increase students' academic outcomes as measured by DIBELS.

Fraser reminded us about the problems of using affirmative remedies to address issues of misdistribution. She argued that they often create injustices of recognition. The data wall portrayed a landscape of need; it contributed to a professional vision in which the objects of knowledge were medicalized bodies that needed to be treated in an instructional emergency room. Students were labeled as "intensive", "strategic", and "at-benchmark" to redistribute and target instructional services. Unfortunately, this placed another stigma on already marginalized populations, reaffirming that disadvantage or disability is within the student, without regard for the social and cultural arrangements that position groups in terms of their differences. A relentless focus on standard expectations of performance emphasized deficit thinking as well as misrecognizing and undervaluing students' funds of knowledge (Moll, 1992).

This misrecognition is also explained by the fact that the data wall had a unidimensional projection of students' differences. That is, the information projected in the data wall essentialized students' identities, portraying them as embodying one form of difference (i.e., intensive, strategic, etc.). The data wall pointed teachers' gaze to a very miniscule aspect of their students' experiences and identities. It erased students' ethnicity, language and the social contexts in which they learn. What was measured trumped other agendas; learning and identity became afterthoughts. As a result, teachers were only able to understand and address the needs of students who were struggling in their school in a limited form.

Interestingly, students at Green Valley Elementary had complex identities, strengths, and needs. A large portion of Green Valley Elementary school enrollment was composed of low-income, Latino students whom first language was Spanish, and Native Americans. As we mentioned at the beginning of the paper, these students tend to experience intersecting forms of exclusion.

Remedies that only focus on students' abilities to perform on narrow cognitive tasks (e.g., breakdown a word into sounds) can produce partial benefits or unintended negative consequences (Crenshaw, 1991) such as stigmatizing and assigning students to remedial groups that take away time from investing in deep learning (Sawyer, 2006). Performativity and its focus on narrow measures of competence perpetuate the fact that the brilliance of students of color has never been axiomatic (Leonard & Martin, 2013).

We are not questioning the validity of DIBELS in predicting early reading skills or as a useful tool for teaching. We question the overuse and emphasis placed in this tool when used within New Capitalism work practices, which can constrain teachers' work to dismantle complex forms of exclusion. At Green Valley Elementary, DIBELS, and the skills it valued, became the tail that wagged the dog. In other words, the test, a narrow estimate of reading proficiency, became the goal of instruction that dimmed all other aspects of literacy development. The data wall composed of DIBELS scores mediated what was valued and discarded. In doing so, the gauge of reading progress kept teachers from discussing and addressing the social, emotional, and political aspects of literacy for their students.

Research on the nature of learning and human development in formal and informal environments (Bell, Lewenstein, Shouse, & Feder, 2009; Gee, 2008; Nasir et al., 2006) has pointed out that assessment tools must take in consideration students' cultural repertoires and complex identities. Bound by the data wall, teachers abandoned efforts to design instruction that integrated students' out-of-school knowledge and practices (Waitoller & Artiles, 2015). This is of particular significance in schools like Green Valley whose student bodies are composed of minoritized populations of children. This minoritization occurs as children struggle to learn because their cultural repertoires have been historically silenced both through the rules of participation that regulate classrooms ecologies and the dominant knowledge systems encoded in the curriculum (Nasir, Rosebery, Warren, & Lee, 2006).

Efforts towards inclusive education should broaden rather than narrow student assessment practices. These assessments practices need to be based in a wider understanding of what counts as student learning (Artiles & Kozleski, 2010). Assessments such as DIBELS present all students with the same stimulus and have them interact and respond in the same way. This benefits those students who perform well in these kinds of situations and marginalizes other students that may be able to better understand and respond to stimuli offered in different forms and with different meanings. Thus, the results of standardized assessments like DIBELS (Rose & Meyer, 2002) are confounded by the characteristics of learners who do not fit the normative assumptions of the test. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles offer approaches to assessment that include flexibility in presentation, as well as response, and are coupled with strategic supports, and offer flexibility in engagement (see Rose & Meyer, 2002 for further explanation). Artifacts based on UDL and culturally responsive pedagogy (Villegas & Lucas, 2002) principles can contribute to building a more inclusive professional vision.

The findings of this study illustrate an emerging trend in inclusive education reform. That is, the convergence of New Capitalism work practices in inclusive education has resulted in the continuation of labeling and segregation of those students considered different from the dominant culture of the school. Our paper demonstrates that these labeling and sorting practices do not necessarily rely on special education or special needs categories as indicated by other authors (e.g., Berhanu, 2008; Graham & Jahnukainen, 2011). We demonstrated that although teachers and administrators aimed to erase special education disability categories from their discourse and practices, in the course of Friday meetings new labels and sorting mechanisms emerged according to the assessments dictated by the school district (i.e., intensive, strategic, at-benchmark).

We observe that, under the guise of inclusive education, new technologies to regulate and address difference are emerging and through them, certain economic and cultural values are spread. Education for all may be transformed into inspection for all. To borrow from McDermott, Edgar and Scarloss (2011), is inclusive education becoming a form of “global norming”? The lure of inclusive education linked to New Capitalism may hide an ableistic and normative agenda. We argue that the practices and artifacts afforded to teachers play a key role in constructing an inclusive professional vision and therefore in inquiring about their own practices and the status quo. The culture of New Capitalism and its auditing culture constrain the types of questions that teachers ask about their practice and its impact on the social fabric of schools.

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